THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Due to sudden and unprecedented growth of air traffic, there is a requirement of additional trained air traffic controllers to man the newly established ATC work stations to handle the increased growth.

(b) and (c) During the last two and half years, 371 Junior Executives (ATC) have been inducted in Airports Authority of India (AAI). Action for filling up another 148 posts of JE (ATC) is in progress. AAI is also utilizing the services of retired ATCOs, wherever possible. It has been programmed to recruit 100 ATCOs every six months for a period of two years to meet the additional requirement.

Modernisation of Mumbai airport

308. SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has pointed out that there have been some slippages in time in the modernisation work of the Mumbai airport;

(b) whether this problem has been referred to the GoM because a wider consultation was required on the matter; and

(c) if so, by what time final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) An Operation, Management and Development Agreement (OMDA) has been signed between the private operator M/s. Mumbai International Airport Private Limited (MIAL) and Airports Authority of India (AAI). Clause (8) of OMDA clearly stipulates various development works that are to be carried out by Mumbai International Airport Limited for modernization and development of the airport in a time bound manner. There is a Committee headed by Secretary (Civil Aviation) in the Ministry which oversees the implementation of OMDA.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Strike by ground staff of Indian

309. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that about 13,000 ground staff of Indian went on flash strike on 11th June, 2007 causing disruption of air services and lot of inconveniences to passengers;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) the reasons for not settling the long pending issues of ground staff that led to strike; and

(d) the steps taken to ensure smooth operation of Indian and proper service to passengers?